

## THE RELATIONSHIP OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS THEIR LEADERSHIP CAPACITY AND THEIR LEVEL OF JOB SATISFACTION IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL IN BANGKOK

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this research was to study the relationship of the teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction in an international school in Bangkok during the academic year 2016-2017. This researcher used the high capacity leadership instrument adopted from Pierce (2007) based on Lambert's (2003) leadership capacity school survey (LCSS), as well as the job satisfaction survey adopted from Drukpa (2004). The results showed there was a significant relationship between the teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction in this international school. The correlation analysis result showed there was a strong positive relationship between teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction. The findings were discussed and the research confirmed that sustained school improvement can be facilitated with increased teacher leadership capacity resulting in increased levels of job satisfaction among teachers as they experience improved student outcomes. The study recommended the school leaders and teachers to sustain and further develop their leadership capacity and skills so as to maintain the high level of job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Teachers, Perceptions, Relationship, Leadership Capacity, Job Satisfaction, International School, Bangkok.

### Introduction

The most important movement in the educational field in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is sustainable school improvement. Teachers are the most important part of this goal. Teachers teach at differing levels of effectiveness. One way to measure this is to consider how much progress children make each academic year. Two reporters for *The Los Angeles Times* did a value-added statistical analysis of thousands of standardized yearly tests and found some teachers impart a year and one half of learning in a year and while others impart two months of learning in the same year (Song 2011). These effective teachers could have expanded influence for sustainable

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school improvement if we were able to improve their leadership capacity. Two of the highest performing teachers in the LA Unified School District had no influence outside their own classrooms (Song 2011). Harris & Lambert (2003) mentioned that the school would lose its vision and purpose if it only depended on one leader (the principal) or a few teachers, to implement vision into the daily functioning of the school. Lambert also pointed out that if schools want to be improved or sustained, every person or teacher should be a leader and involved in school functions to develop a strong capacity for working at that school. Teachers are one of the main pillars of a sound and progressive society (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2010). They inculcate knowledge, values, and skills; and apart from parents, are held responsible for molding and refining the minds of learners at the kindergarten, primary, secondary, higher education, and finally in vocational training. Teachers who are satisfied with their job as teachers usually work more effectively than the ones who are frustrated or disaffected. It is believed that satisfied teachers are more productive, earn higher salaries, receive better promotions, and climb the career ladder quicker than their less effective or productive colleagues (Life Directions Institute, 2014).

### **Research Objectives:**

There were three objectives:

1. To identify teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity in this international school in Bangkok.
2. To determine the level of teachers' job satisfaction teaching in this international school in Bangkok.
3. To determine the relationship between teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction teaching in an international school in Bangkok.

### **Literature Review**

Lambert (1998, 2003) published the book, *Building Leadership Capacity for School Improvement*. Her high leadership capacity book introduces four characteristics needed to achieve sustainable school improvement. They were: intense focus on vision, reflection and innovation, shared governance, and monitoring and responding to student achievement. These four elements of high leadership capacity are required for the school to develop sustainable school improvement. Lambert also conducted and published her questionnaire entitled "Leadership Capacity School Survey", which this researcher used in this study. Lambert (1998, 2003) proposed the high leadership capacity matrix into four areas of the combination of skillfulness and participation on (1) high skill to high participation, (2) high skill to low participation, (3) low skill to high participation, and (4) low skill to low participation. These four matrix levels demonstrate the role model of leadership capacity for each individual leader. According to Lambert (1998), there were five critical categories of leadership capacity found to improve school success such as (1) broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership, (2) inquiry-based use of information to inform shared decisions and practice, (3) roles and responsibilities that reflect broad involvement and collaboration, (4) reflective practice and innovation as the norm, and (5) high student achievement. Lambert (2003) added one more element to make six

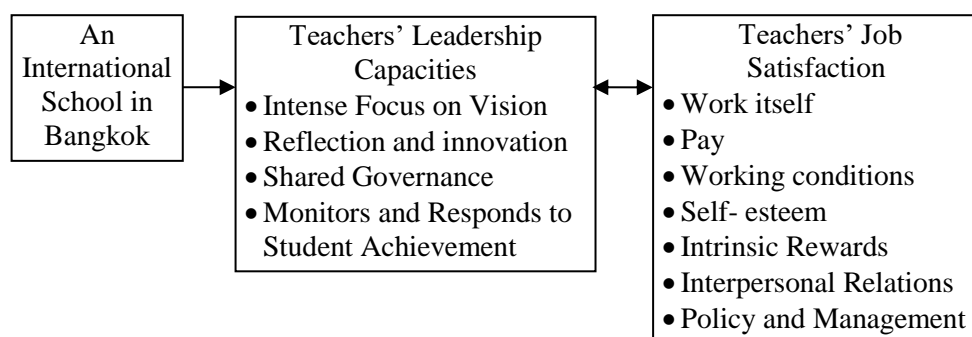
critical features of high leadership capacity. They now included shared vision which helps maintain program coherence. Moreover, Pierce (2007), while doing a doctoral dissertation on Lambert (2003) LCSS, combined the six categories into four. According to Lambert (1998), unless people continually renew and expand the new school vision, they will revert back gradually to the old, comfortable, unchallenging, and less difficult to implement vision. By reviewing and renewing the vision on a weekly, monthly, and yearly basis through shared responsibility for decision making, the high capacity leadership skills become the norm of the school. Everyone is responsible for meaningful and purposeful collaboration, building trust and transparency about ones roles and responsibilities. Lambert remarks that shared governance transforms the whole process of vision making in the school into an ever changing, improving, blue print for the organization. The most important characteristic of the high leadership capacity in schools (Lambert (2003) is the one that monitors and responds to student achievement. According to Marshall (2013), sustainable student achievement is the goal of the school improvement movement. In order for schools to be successfully sustainably improved, the principals and teachers need to work well in the following four areas: teacher supervision, curriculum planning, interim assessments, and teacher evaluations. Marshall believed supervision and evaluation should be fair and logical.

Motivation- Hygiene Theory, the Two- Factor Theory, is one of the relative and realistic models of job satisfaction that seeks to determine the factors that cause motivation (Lunenberg and Ornstein, 2008). According to Frederick Herzberg, this theory has two main factors: one being called motivators, job satisfiers, and the other being called hygiene factors, or job dissatisfiers. Motivators pertain to the good feelings that are associated with the job itself - psychological factors, content, or intrinsic factors that produce employee satisfaction. These include growth, advancement, responsibility, the work itself, recognition, and the achievements of the employee (Lunenberg and Ornstein, 2008). On the other hand, hygiene factors, the bad feelings that are linked with the environmental surroundings of the job - physical factors, context, or extrinsic factors; produce employee dissatisfaction. These include company working conditions, policies, supervision, interpersonal relations, and employee pay (Lunenberg and Ornstein, 2008). The Hierarchy of Needs, developed by Abraham Maslow, is one of the most cited and used theories for motivation studies in organizations. According to this construct, people are inspired to accomplish certain needs. Once those needs are fulfilled, individuals aspire to fulfill their next higher level of needs.

In a study done by Chiyachantana (1994) on this topic, she categorized job satisfaction determinants into two categories: situational and personal correlates. Situational correlates, which are determined by both the job and larger environment, include supervision, company identification, type and amount of work, career future, physical working conditions, co-workers, and financial rewards. Personal correlates are the individual differences that influence job satisfaction including gender, age, longevity, and management level (Chiyachantana, 1994).

### Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 is the conceptual framework of this study based on the theories presented above.



**Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework of This Study**

### Research Instrument

The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship of teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction teaching in this international school in Bangkok during the academic year of 2016-17.

This research was designed as a quantitative and relationship study, which adopted the questionnaire by Pierce (2007) Leadership Capacity School Survey, which was developed from Lambert's (2003) Leadership Capacity School Survey Questionnaire to investigate the teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity. This researcher also used the job satisfaction survey from the related research conducted by Drukpa (2004). The questionnaire was divided into three parts: Part (I) was general demographic questions of teachers including their age, education, gender, and nationality. Part (II) was 17 questions about teachers' perception toward their leadership capacity; and Part (III) was 43 questions about teachers' perception of their level of job satisfaction teaching in this international school in Bangkok. The researcher used descriptive statistics and the Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient of Correlation method in this study.

### Population

The target population of this study was the full-time faculty teachers in an international school in Bangkok during the academic year of 2016-2017. There were 55 teachers currently teaching in this school, so all 55 teachers were used as the target group for this study's investigation, 45 teachers returned the valid questionnaires finally.

### Findings

The findings of this study were based on the data analysis of all valid questionnaires.

### Research Objective One

Table 1 shows the summary of the total of means and standard deviation scores of teachers' perceptions towards their leadership capacity in this international school in

Bangkok. The total mean score was 3.91 in the range of 3.51- 4.50 and is interpreted as *strength* according to our data interpretation standards. Among the four constructs, Monitors and Responds to Student Achievement had the highest mean score, 4.33 whereas, Shared Governance received the lowest mean score of 3.68. Teachers in this international school are deeply focused on monitoring and responding to student achievement.

**Table 1: The Summary of Means and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Perception towards Their Leadership Capacity (N=45)**

Leadership Capacity Questions	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Construct 1: Intense Focus on Vision	3.84	.83	Strength
Construct 2: Reflection and Innovation	3.79	.83	Strength
Construct 3: Shared Governance	3.68	.88	Strength
Construct 4: Monitors and Responds to Student Achievement	4.33	.53	Strength
Total	3.91	.77	Strength

#### *Research Objective Two*

Table 2 shows the summary of the total of means and standard deviation scores of teachers' perceptions towards the level of their job satisfaction in an international school in Bangkok. The total mean score was 3.92 in the range of 3.51- 4.50 and is interpreted as *high* according to our data interpretation standards. These results indicate the teachers' perceptions towards their level of job satisfaction is high. The job itself satisfaction level had the highest mean of 4.19. The teachers in this international school in Bangkok are very satisfied to be teachers in this school. The lowest mean, 3.69, Policy and Management, is very often the most difficult part of a teacher's daily life but nevertheless this mean is in the range of 3.51 – 4.50 and was interpreted as *high* according to the data interpretation criteria.

**Table 2: Summary of the Means and Standard Deviations of the Seven Job Factors in Section III of the Research Questionnaire (N=45)**

Satisfaction Levels of	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Teaching job	4.19	.82	High
Pay	3.72	.62	High
Working Condition	4.02	.65	High
Self-esteem	3.91	.61	High
Intrinsic Reward	3.73	.80	High
Interpersonal Relation	4.11	.73	High
Policy and Management	3.69	.95	High
Total	3.92	.86	High

#### *Research Objective Three*

The results of Table 3 showed the relationship between teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction in an international school in Bangkok is significant. Accordingly, it was concluded by this researcher that there

was a significant relationship between teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction in this international school in Bangkok. Thus, this researcher accepted the research hypothesis and rejected the null hypothesis in this study. Additionally, the  $r$  value .775\*\* indicates there was a very strong positive relationship between teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction in this international school in Bangkok.

**Table 3: Pearson Correlation between Teachers' Perceptions towards Their Leadership Capacity and Their Level of Job Satisfaction (N=45)**

		Level of Job Satisfaction	Conclusion
Teachers' Perception toward Their Leadership Capacity	Pearson Correlation	.775**	There is a significant relationship
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	45	

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

## Discussion

### *1. The Teachers' Perception towards Their Leadership Capacity in This International School in Bangkok*

The total mean score of teachers' perceptions towards their leadership capacity in this international school in Bangkok was regarded as strength according to the data interpretation criteria. All four of the leadership capacity constructs received substantial mean scores which were regarded as strength according to the data interpretation criteria. These are arranged in order with highest to the lowest mean score as follows: (1) Monitors and Responds to Student Achievement, (2) Intense Focus on Vision, (3) Reflection and Innovation, and (4) Shared Governance. In a school, not just the head teacher can take a leadership role; every teacher can be in the role of leadership depending on their professionalism and skillfulness. This study found the strong teacher leadership capacity based on the Lambert's (2003) four main elements include (1) intense focus on vision, (2) reflection and innovation, (3) shared governance, and (4) Monitoring and Responding to Student Achievement. According to Lambert (2000), collaboration is the main function in leadership capacity for a shared school vision and mission. By exchanging information, the most effective solution will sometimes be self-evident and make the decision-making process easy. Every teacher should be self-motivated, encouraging everyone in a helpful way, giving positive feedback, and inspiring student achievement. Teachers are the largest work group in a school. Teachers should be of resolute mind and have the courage to take responsibility in the school. Additionally, teachers' leadership capacity primarily focuses on the functioning of the school. An effective teacher will not only be networking, collaborating, and motivating, they also will be positively affecting student achievement. Leadership capacity needs self-regulation and self-efficacy to increase and improve.

Like this study, Akomolafe (2012) studied Principals' leadership capacities as perceived by teachers in secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria and found that every teacher perceived their principal leadership capacity positively. Akomolafe's

study confirmed that there were strong leadership capacities identified in collaboration, motivation, delegation and executive behavior by the principal in the sampled school.

Greenlee (2004) conducted research entitled, *Building Teacher Leadership Capacity through Educational Leadership Programs*. Greenlee (2004) suggested teacher leadership capacity in schools was important in order to increase or improve educational leadership preparation programs. The improvement of leadership capacity needs to be developed in both teachers and principals leading to a democratic learning community. This researcher agreed and also believes the quality of the principals' investment in teacher leadership capacity will be an important process in the future of school administrations.

Majoni & Kasowe (2011) conducted research entitled, *Analyzing the Leadership Capacity Challenges towards Potential Intervention Strategies for Open and Distance Learning Academic Administrators in Zimbabwe*. This study was done to determine what leadership related qualifications they held and what the leadership roles were accomplishing. The researcher believed that it was important to ensure leaders support the survival of open distance leadership institutions and to promote the development of academic leadership styles to ensure effective and productive academic departments. Based on this study's finding, this researcher also supported Majoni & Kasowe (2011) that teachers, staff or administrators need to develop leadership capacity in to accomplish sustainable improvement in operating and maintaining a high-quality effective school.

The study findings indicated the importance of teachers' leadership capacity, as other previous researchers, such as Mitchell (2012), Majoni & Kasowe (2011), also mentioned and supported that to improve leadership capacity was not just the job of administrators and leaders.

## *2. The Teachers' Job Satisfaction in This International School in Bangkok*

According to this research study findings, the total mean score of teachers' perceptions towards their level of job satisfaction in this international school in Bangkok was regarded as *high* according to the data interpretation criteria. The seven factors of job satisfaction received *high* mean scores according to the data interpretation criteria. From high to low the study found the teachers' job satisfaction factors were: *Teaching Job, Interpersonal Relationships, Working Conditions, Self-Esteem, Intrinsic Rewards, Pay, and Policy and Management*.

This study revealed a high level of teacher satisfaction in the sampled international school. It is a very good international school, with a good ranking in Thailand's International School Association list. Students from 50 nations attend the school. The school offers a pre-kindergarten through high school program. Students are educated in a US curriculum which features inquiry-based learning, project-based learning in middle school, and advanced placement (AP) classes in high school. The study confirmed that the school had good learning facilities, working conditions, and professional teacher teams; therefore, the teachers' job satisfaction was very high in this school.

Similar studies like Ma Khin Su's (2010), where he conducted a study on the job satisfaction of two-hundred sixty faculty members at an international University

of Thailand, found that the level of job satisfaction of faculty members who were teaching in undergraduate levels was high. The teachers were highly satisfied regarding job-in-general, supervision, and co-workers and were moderately satisfied on pay. With the work itself, Thai teachers appear to be highly satisfied compared to the foreign teachers. In terms of promotion, Thai faculty members were moderately satisfied and foreign teachers were least satisfied.

From Myitkyina, Kachin State, Myanmar, another researcher Hkwan San Mai (2013) studied the teachers' job satisfaction of three basic high schools. The results showed that all respondents were highly satisfied with achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and supervision. They were moderately satisfied with personal growth and advancement, interpersonal relations, salary, working condition, and company policy.

### *3. The Relationship between Teachers' Perception towards Their Leadership Capacity and Their Job Satisfaction in This International School in Bangkok*

According to the research results, there was a strong positive relationship between teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction in this international school in Bangkok. According to Harris & Lambert (2003), leadership capacity is a wide, broad term which has been used for decades. It is one of the more popular terms in 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders' roles. There are many criteria in leadership capacity building but to build leadership capacity, people should have two main critical conditions in order to successfully establish sustainability. This study found there was a strong positive relationship between teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their level of job satisfaction in this international school in Bangkok. This researcher believed these two factors are the most important qualities to sustain and improve school management and administration.

Teachers' leadership capacity was closely related to their job satisfaction, which should be noted by the school leaders in any re-organization or school improvement process. Leadership capacity is one of the most important factors that can achieve sustainable improvement because it motivates people to build trust and encourages them to become involved in working together through collaboration, as Harris & Lambert (2003) stated. According to Lambert (1998), there were critical categories of leadership capacity needed to improve school success such as broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership; inquiry-based use of information to inform shared decisions and practice; roles and responsibilities that reflect broad involvement and collaboration; reflective practice and innovation as the norm, and high student achievement. Since this study also confirmed the strong positive relationship between teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity and their job satisfaction in the school, this research wanted the school leaders and administrators to understand this relationship and its importance for the sustainable development and improvement of the school in the future.

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